



Brighton & Hove LGBT Switchboard.
Health & Safety Policy and Procedures

Statement

Brighton and Hove LGBT Switchboard's policy is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all its employees, volunteers and service users. It will provide such information, training and supervision, as its staff, volunteers and service users need to meet this end. The policy will follow compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974).

Responsibilities

The Management Committee (MC) of Brighton and Hove LGBT Switchboard will hold the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The MC will take collective responsibility for drawing the attention of staff to any health and safety matters that may need to be discussed and/ or acted upon. The Director of Brighton and Hove LGBT Switchboard will be delegated responsibility for ensuring the compliance of Health and Safety regulations, policy and procedure and for making sure that the MC are alerted to any potential hazards and risks presented to the organisation.

Risk Assessment

The Director, with the support of another staff member, will carry out a risk assessment of the activities and work place as and when required. Risk Assessments will be carried out after any change in layout of the office, after the introduction of new equipment into the office environment or at the request of the MC where any specific potential health and safety risk has been identified. On an annual basis, there will be a review of the latest risk assessments to see if they are still relevant or whether they need to be reviewed or any further risks assessed.

Where Switchboard organises any off site events, these will also be risk assessed and any risks mitigated as far as reasonably possible.

Monitoring

A nominated staff member will monitor the implementation of the Health and Safety policy. The monitoring will look at the number and type of accidents and incidents occurring, hazards identified and the understanding and knowledge of the policy by staff, volunteers and service users. A nominated member of staff, with the support of the Director, will investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences in the

workplace. The Director will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers have been issued with a copy of the Health and Safety policy.

Accident Book

A nominated member of staff will establish and maintain an accident book which records any accidents that occur in the Switchboard workplace or in carrying out Switchboard activities. On an annual basis, this will be reviewed by the MC.

Complaints

The Director, will investigate any complaints by any member of staff relating to Health and Safety or welfare at work. The Director will make representations to the Board on matters arising out of any investigations.

This policy and the way in which it operates will be reviewed every 2 years.

The policy was reviewed in Nov 2013

Signature.....

Chair

Date.....

Health & Safety Procedures

These procedures have been developed and refined following an assessment of the risks presented to staff, volunteers and clients by the organisation's activities, and how these can be managed. These will be reviewed if there are any significant changes to the office environment, ways of working or related procedures. The Director has overall operational responsibility for implementing the Procedures but all staff and volunteers are responsible for aspects of this as outlined.

Operational Management of the Organisation

This policy and procedure will form part of the induction of each volunteer or member of staff, and must be provided to them by the Administrator within a month of joining the organisation.

Display Screen Equipment

The Health and Safety Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Regulations came into force on 1st January 1993 and seek to protect the health of workers by reducing risks from Visual Display Unit (VDU) work. Switchboard will ensure that it complies with the Regulations by ensuring that a DSE risk assessment is carried out for all staff that use a VDU as part of their work within 1 month of commencing work with the organisation. If the equipment that a member of staff uses is changed, a further DSE assessment will be carried out within a month of this change.

Switchboard will ensure that any recommendations arising from the risk assessment are implemented to ensure that staff can work safely for the organisation.

Safety Alarm

Switchboard subscribes to a 'safety alarm' contract which provides staff and volunteers with an alarm that sounds within the office building in the event of an emergency but also reaches an emergency service who will call out the police and a key holder.

On an annual basis in line with review of this procedure, the Administrator will review the key holder list and issue an updated list to the service. Any key holder who attends a call out must contact a second key holder to accompany them and should not attend a call out alone.

Helpline Service

Where a volunteer is working alone in the building, they should ensure that the door to the Switchboard office is kept closed at all times and that they have the 'safety alarm pendant' within arm's reach

Counselling Service

The counselling service entails one to one private contact between clients and Switchboard counsellors, however we will mitigate any risks arising from this by ensuring that:

- The initial assessment of a new, and therefore unknown, client will never be carried out when a counselor is alone in the building. The counselor will confirm to a third party when the session will commence and end, and will notify this third party when the session has terminated so that they know that they are safe.
- Counsellors will adhere to Switchboard's 'lone worker' policy at all times when they are alone with a client.
- Counsellors will never meet a client without carrying the 'safety alarm pendant' with them that allows them to raise the alarm in the building and to an emergency call centre
- Counsellors will only meet clients on Switchboard premises and will take common sense precautions including ensuring that they are seated nearest to the door and that they have the safety alarm pendant within reach at all times.

Outreach sessions including for the Health Inclusion Project

When working outside the building, the member of staff or volunteer will consider the following factors to evaluate any risk and decide whether there should be two members of staff present and/or whether the staff attending should check in and out of the meeting with a colleague:

- Nature of the event and risk of hostility or conflict
- Location of the event
- Time of day
- Transport arrangements.

If in doubt, the individual concerned must discuss the matter with their line manager, and where there is perceived to be any element of risk, then a member of staff or volunteer will not work alone.

Where there is any risk presented by using public transport to the event, a taxi should be used and booked for the return trip in advance.

Staff must never attend an outreach event without a fully functioning and charged mobile telephone.

Review

These Procedures were developed as result of a risk assessment of current activities carried out in July 2013 and will be reviewed every year, although individual risk assessments may be triggered by any changes to the office environment, ways of working or related procedures.

The procedure will be reviewed no later than 1st of August 2015.

Signature.....

Chair

Date.....