



**Huntington's  
Disease  
Association**

# **Health and safety policy**

Issue date:	July 2025
Version number:	2
Review date:	July 2027
Status:	Approved

# Health and safety policy



## Introduction

The Huntington's Disease Association recognises and accepts that it is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of its employees when at work, and of all non-employees who have access to the services of the Charity.

We are committed to ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable, that we minimise work-related injuries, ill-health, fatalities and we reduce health and safety risks. We also ensure that we comply with all applicable health and safety legislation.

The Board of Trustees and Heads of Department lead by example on health and safety promoting a culture where everyone is empowered to ensure health and safety standards are maintained.

We provide information, instruction and supervision in relation to health and safety and display our Health, Safety and Welfare Policy Statement, signed by our Chief Executive at our Charity's Central Office. The Health and Safety Law poster is also displayed in the Charity's Central office and a copy is provided to all staff at induction.

## Scope

This policy applies to all people working for the Huntington's Disease Association or on our behalf of the Huntington's Disease Association in any capacity, including employees, trustees, agency workers, seconded workers, volunteers, contractors and suppliers.

The purpose of the policy is to establish general standards for health and safety at work and to distribute responsibility for their achievement.

## Responsibilities

### Executive Council

The Executive Council are responsible for reviewing and approving the charity's Health and Safety policy and authorising the provision of resources to allow the policy to be put into practice.

### Heads of Department

The Chief Executive and Heads of Department are accountable for the production, execution and implementation of the Health and Safety policy and relevant procedures. They are also responsible for the effective communication of the policy to staff and for the ongoing monitoring, reporting and assessment of its effectiveness.

Heads of Department are also responsible for sourcing relevant resources to meet health and safety requirements and ensuring that individual responsibilities relating to health and safety are understood. They will ensure that all employees, volunteers and contractors are informed, trained, supervised or otherwise instructed in matters of Health and safety, fire precautions and other emergency procedures as relevant. They are also responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are carried out on working practices, events and charity services before they start, if possible, to ensure risks are identified, mitigated or accepted.

Heads of Department are responsible for investigating all accidents and incidents involving employees, volunteers, visitors and ensuring that details are recorded in the accident book for minor accidents that have taken place onsite in Central Office or in an accident / incident report form for more serious occurrences across the organisation. They will ensure the cause is reviewed and that relevant action is taken to prevent reoccurrence.

### **All employees, volunteers and contractors**

All employees, volunteers and contractors are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own Health and safety and others who may be affected by their actions at work and complying with any duty or requirement under the Health and Safety Act. They are required to follow relevant policies and procedures, correctly use items provided in accordance with training or instruction and report to their Line Manager / Head of Department any situation that they consider to be a health and safety risk or danger, for example, electrical faults, equipment safety issues, escape route blockages etc. They must also report all accidents, incidents and damage, whether serious or not, as soon as possible to their line manager / Head of Department using the relevant reporting method (accident book / accident or incident form).

All employees, volunteers and contractors must be familiar and comply with the charity's agreed health and safety policy and relevant procedures. The refusal of any employee to meet their obligations will be regarded as a matter to be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure. For volunteers, this will be investigated and may result in termination of the volunteer role. Lastly, for contractors, this will be investigated and may result in the termination of the contract or service level agreement.

Employees undertaking work in other establishments must familiarise themselves with their Health and Safety, Business Continuity Plan and Confidentiality policies.

## **Training**

All employees, volunteers and contractors will receive training and instruction in the safe systems of work that apply to their areas of responsibility and employment where required by law or otherwise relevant. On no account should any person attempt to use equipment or chemicals on which they have had no training, are unsure as to the safety, or where obvious hazards exist. If in any doubt they should consult their line manager / Head of Department. Training needs will be identified at induction, at regular

supervisions or annually at appraisal, by both employer and employee, and training records are maintained by the Line Manager with support from the Operations team.

## **Reporting of accidents and minor / serious incidents**

All staff have the opportunity to raise any health and safety concerns with their line manager during their one to ones, though should not wait until their one to one to raise any urgent concerns or incidents.

All accidents, incidents, near misses or threats that occur on charity premises or whilst a staff member or volunteer is engaged on charity business must be reported to a line manager, or Head of Department as appropriate as soon as is practicable and in any event, no later than the end of the day in which the accident or incident occurred.

For minor accidents that take place in the charity's central office, the details should be reported and fully recorded in the accident book, including any remedial action taken. All other accidents or incidents, should be reported to a line manager, or Head of Department and recorded in an accident / incident reporting form, completed fully with dates, details and any action taken.

If there is an accident involving a staff member, volunteer or service user at an external venue being used for charity business, an accident form for the venue should be completed in the first instance. A copy of the venue's incident / accident form and/or risk assessment should be obtained where possible, and a copy of the charity's accident / incident form should be completed for the purposes of record keeping.

The line manager and/or Head of Department will make initial investigations and discuss with the Chief Executive to confirm the necessary action that will be taken to ensure the incident is controlled or will not occur again. The Head of Department will ensure that the accident / incident report log is completed fully with the details of the accident / incident along with the details of action taken. The Head of Department will ensure that a copy of the accident / incident form is stored in the Management folder on the shared drive and that a copy of the form is recorded in the staff / volunteer or service user file on the relevant system (e.g. BreatheHR, Donorfy, Filemaker). If the incident is deemed to be a serious incident, involving death or serious injury, relevant authorities must be notified immediately.

The responsibility for meeting the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985 (RIDDOR) to the Health and Safety Executive, shall rest with the Chief Executive, as delegated to Heads of Department.

Specialist advisory bodies will be consulted, such as environmental health, the Health and Safety Executive, where relevant.

## Monitoring

The Huntington's Disease Association will monitor working conditions to ensure safe working practices are being followed. Employees will be consulted on matters relating to health and safety in their supervisions and annually at their appraisal. Risk assessments, accident / incident reports, the accident book and work-related causes of sickness absence will also be reviewed regularly and investigated by the Heads of Department with relevant action taken to prevent reoccurrence.

## First aid

It is the policy of the Huntington's Disease Association to make provision for First Aid and the training of 'First Aiders' in accordance with the First Aid Regulations (1982). Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring the Regulations are implemented and for identifying training needs.

All staff who travel as part of their role carry a first aid kit in their car. A fully equipped first aid kit is located in the charity's Central Office in the supplies cupboard.

Training in First Aid will be given to nominated individuals and their names displayed for information. There are also trained first aiders available in the staff team that manage the building in which our central office is located. No untrained persons are to administer first aid except where nominated individuals are absent. No treatments are to be administered, First Aid only, i.e. no painkillers, tablets, eye ointments, creams or lotions. All First Aid given is to be recorded in the Accident Register.

## Accident prevention

The Huntington's Disease Association will, as far as possible, remove hazards in our working environment and practices that could cause serious injury to our staff, volunteers, contractors, and children, young people or adults using our services, or accessing our premises. Where such hazards cannot be removed, we will put in place procedures and processes to protect from potential harm.

For charity services, events and activities, we will carry out and regularly review the following, as relevant:

1. We will undertake a risk assessment of our events and activities
2. We will keep records of our risk assessments and reviews
3. We will obtain up to date records on medical needs/allergies of event attendees prior to each event for their health and safety
4. We will make sure we have next of kin contact details for all children and young people taking part in charity activities and knowledge of the closest emergency hospital or walk in centre prior to the event

5. We will make sure our first aid boxes are in working order, adequately stocked and up to date
6. We will make sure that all incident / accidents are recorded according to reporting procedures, reviewed and action taken to prevent similar accidents in the future, as far as possible
7. We will review our insurance arrangements on an annual basis
8. We will make sure staff, volunteers and anyone involved in charity activity are aware of their personal health and safety responsibilities to keep themselves and others safe and make sure they are aware of all relevant accident and emergency evacuation procedures
9. We will ensure we are aware of and fulfil our responsibilities under health and safety and fire safety legislation

## **Fire safety**

Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that staff understand the procedure they should follow in the event of a fire in the workplace. In the charity's central office, the building management company has nominated fire marshals to safely evacuate the building, ensure the safety of all staff and ensure relevant procedures are followed.

The building management company for the Charity's Central Office report and advice on the standard of fire safety on site and the standard of fire training of its staff. They are also responsible for investigating any fires that take place on the premises and submit reports of such incidents. They are also responsible for carrying out regular fire and evacuation drills.

The most senior person present is responsible for ensuring that the Emergency Services are called out in the event of Fire by dialing 999.

Information on emergency procedures forms part of the induction training for all employees.

## **Electrical safety**

All charity owned equipment is visually inspected, PAT tested, repaired or replaced as necessary on an annual basis to ensure its safety. If any equipment appears unsafe, for example worn wires, it should not be used and a repair or replacement should be discussed with the relevant line manager.

If you work remotely, it is your responsibility to make sure your equipment is PAT tested annually. This can either be done in Central Office on a scheduled day (arranged with the Operations team), or you can source a PAT tester local to you. They can invoice the charity directly, or you may expense the full cost incurred.

## **Condemnation and disposal of equipment**

When broken or replaced, equipment will be disposed of in the safest way possible that ensures minimal environmental impact and no breach of data. All condemned computer equipment is wiped and disposed of via our contracted I.T company with parts recycled where possible.

## **Food safety**

In the charity's central office or at charity activities at which food is provided, stored and served, it is important that this is done safely and that expiration dates are checked. Any suspected outbreak of food poisoning or other unexplained and possibly food related incidents must be reported to a line manager / Head of Department.

Training on food safety is provided at induction as relevant to the individual role.

In advance of any events organised by the charity where food will be present, every care will be taken to risk assess the serving environment and take record of any dietary or allergen information for all in attendance.

## **Control of substances hazardous to health**

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) require the Huntington's Disease Association to identify those substances which are in use and which are hazardous to health (as legally defined) and to assess the risk of those substances. Relevant controls must be provided and monitored to prevent exposure to substances hazardous to health and training provided to employees on these matters as relevant to their role. Heads of Department are responsible for implementing these Regulations.

When new remote or hybrid staff join the charity, a 'Working from home' assessment is carried out to establish any health and safety risks, including whether a COSHH assessment is required for their role, or in their working location.

## **Lifting and handling**

Where lifting and handling of goods is involved in an employee's role, the relevant line manager is responsible for communicating safe lifting techniques. Specific training needs are identified and training provided in lifting and handling to any staff who require it.

## **Personal safety**

The personal safety of all employees is very important to the Huntington's Disease Association. There are separate policies containing relevant procedure on lone working and violence prevention and reduction.

During all staff inductions, working from home assessments take place to ensure all employees are working in an appropriate and safe environment/s whilst conducting charity business.

## **New and expectant mothers**

Once notified of pregnancy and/or birth of a child, the Huntington's Disease Association is committed to ensuring that there are arrangements in place for the identification and mitigation of those activities and processes that could present a risk to new and expectant mothers at work. The charity's New and expectant parent policy full outlines our commitment and procedures in place.

Upon returning to work following maternity leave, formal 'Return to work' and (where applicable) 'Working from home' assessments occur to re-assess their environment, and to address any health or wellbeing concerns.

## **Protecting disabled people at work**

The Huntington's Disease Association has a duty to do everything that is reasonably practicable to keep our staff, volunteers, contractors and those using our services safe from harm, including anyone with a disability or long-term health condition.

The charity's central office is located in a building with disabled access and parking. Where it is known by the charity that an employee, volunteer, visitor or contractor has a disability, we will ensure the building's management are aware as relevant to ensure their safe exit in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building.

The Huntington's Disease Association has a contract with Language Line which enables access to British Sign Language interpreter when required.

Where a disability or health condition is declared by an employee, either in their initial recruitment paperwork or through later discussion, reasonable adjustments will be made to overcome any risk identified. A risk assessment will be undertaken and the employee will be fully consulted, as will any organisations the employee agrees the charity can liaise with to help the charity understand possible effects on workplace health and safety and adaptive or supportive measures that can be implemented. The charity will ensure that assumptions are not made about the employees' disability or long-term condition and that any adjustments made are a help and not a hindrance. Where relevant, short-term arrangements may be implemented to accommodate delays such as a wait for 'Access to work' grant funding or waiting for work to commence on any building adjustments required.

The Huntington's Disease Association is committed to creating a working environment that allows our staff, volunteers and contractors feel comfortable when talking about their disability or long-term health condition.



The charity is a Disability Confident employer, meaning we agree to the Disability Confident Scheme commitments within our recruitment practices.

## **Recruitment**

Our recruitment processes are set up to ensure the health and safety of our staff and service users are prioritised throughout. Prior to issuing any contract of employment, we carry out internal safer recruitment checks, including ID checks, right to work confirmation and employer reference checks.

Additionally, as part of our safeguarding we require all staff to hold an Enhanced DBS check. We ensure all staff have received certification prior to joining the charity. It is a requirement of the charity for all staff to be registered for the DBS Update Service and process annual renewal every year. The charity will reimburse the annual fee.

## **Driving safety**

Where relevant to the role, employees will ensure that their vehicles are insured for business purposes as appropriate, and will preferably hold break down cover. Vehicles must be maintained according to legal requirements. Mobile phones must not be used whilst driving, unless appropriately secured and used for navigation purposes only. Staff who use their vehicle for work must provide the Operations team with details of car make, model and registration plate in case required in an emergency situation. This information is stored securely within our HR and lone worker systems.

## **Visitors**

The Huntington's Disease Association wishes to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare of visitors to the charity's premises will be of the highest standard. All Huntington's Disease Association staff are responsible for ensuring that all guests and visitors are aware of any evacuation procedures currently practiced at the venue in which charity activity is taking place. All visitors to the office must sign in at the building reception so they are accounted for in building logs. Any member of staff who notices someone acting in a way which would endanger others, should inform their Head of Department, another senior member of staff or the venue owner as appropriate to the situation.

Supervision of young workers, students and interns will be arranged/monitored by the relevant line manager and they will ensure that they are not left unaccompanied. Checks are made with our insurance providers to ensure they [student or intern], and we [the charity], are fully covered for the duration of their time with us. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out as required.

## Smoking

The Huntington's Disease Association aims to ensure that staff and volunteers are not exposed to environments where smoking takes place. At the building in which the Charity's Central Office is based, anyone wishing to smoke or vape must do so outside and away from the building.

Whilst engaged in charity business, staff must not smoke in the presence of clients.

Where staff have concerns about potential exposure to second hand smoke they should raise this with their line manager in the first instance. Whilst all reasonable steps will be taken to reduce the risk to all employees, those who are pregnant or who have a specific, medically supported condition that is exacerbated by smoke (e.g. asthma), should not be placed in such an environment intentionally. Should they find themselves exposed to second hand smoke, for example, at an event or visit with a client, they can request that the person does not smoke or they can terminate the visit if they feel it is necessary.

## Display Screen Equipment

All new computer installations must adhere to the British Standard Specifications and comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992. All new employees operating such equipment are expected to read the Health and Safety Executive guidance entitled 'Working with Display Screen Equipment'. New employees who regularly use VDUs are advised to undergo sight screening.

DSE workstation assessments are carried out by human resources with new employees or as and when there is a change that necessitates re-assessment. The Huntington's Disease Association provides a health plan for all employees through which eye test and glasses costs can be reimbursed on meeting particular criteria. The charity can also provide eye test vouchers on request.

### **DSE Assessments for Homeworkers:**

On their first day of work, all homeworkers will undergo a remote DSE assessment via video call (using platforms such as Google Meet or Zoom). During this call, either the HR Manager, or, in their absence, the employee's line manager or a member of the Operations team, will conduct the assessment and perform a live visual check of the employee's working environment. Any questions or concerns raised will be addressed immediately, and actions required to ensure a safe working space (such as new equipment or software purchases) will be recorded.

## Health and wellbeing

We recognise that the work we do can carry an emotional weight at times. Additionally, we may all at times be navigating challenging personal circumstances alongside our work commitments.

Our team's health and wellbeing is key to our success and to providing the required level of support to our community. Providing a positive work environment is a cornerstone to employees' mental health and wellbeing. The Huntington's Disease Association is committed to providing a positive working environment alongside and in support of the requirements of the Equality Act and the Health and Safety at Work Act.

All staff are able to access benefits to support their wellbeing, including financial reimbursement for medical appointments, an Employee Assistance Programme, and counselling. More information on these benefits can be provided by your line manager or Human Resources.

Where a staff member is displaying symptoms of illness, i.e. sneezing, coughing etc, we ask that they avoid contact with others where possible. If they feel well enough to work, they should cancel any in-person appointments or office visits and work from home. If they feel unwell and not able to work, they should follow the charity's absence reporting procedure as described in the employee handbook. Where a staff member has had recent contact with those who might be vulnerable to illness, they should discuss with their line manager and consider notifying any contacts from last 48 hours in case they wish to take any of their own precautions.

This advice should be followed until the staff member feels recovered, their symptoms have stopped and they're well enough to resume normal activities.

## **Working time**

The Huntington's Disease Association is committed to the principles of the Working Time Regulations. No staff member is expected to work more than 48 hours per week on average. All employment contracts issued after 2019, include a working time opt out agreement as we understand it is a legal requirement for employees to opt out if they work over 48 hours on average per week which may be the case if they have additional employment. We also have a separate working time opt out agreement in our addition employment form for any staff who have a contract issued pre-2019.

## **Risk management**

The Huntington's Disease Association ensures that risks relating to working practices, events and charity services are assessed and managed. Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that any action required is implemented to remove or reduce any risks identified. Risk assessments are carried out at the start of a new activity or event and are reviewed annually or as and when changes take place. An audit of first aid, fire

safety and other health and safety measures at the charity's central office will be reviewed annually.