



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

TO NOTE

Specific Risk Assessments are created project to project.
Our Child Protection Policy sits separately to this document.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Directors of Talking Forward manage and operate all proceedings for the company. This policy applies to the directors and all employees of the company whilst working on behalf of the company locally or nationally.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Talking Forward recognise that we have a duty under the **Health & Safety Act 1974** to ensure a healthy and safe working environment. Our policy is to endeavour to:

- Provide and maintain safe and healthy conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees and to provide such information, training and supervision as is required for this purpose.
- Protect clients and the general public against risks to their health and safety, which may arise from the company's activities, wherever we are present.

The effective implementation of Talking Forward's Health and Safety policy requires the participation of all staff. However, the overall and final responsibility lies with the Directors of the company. We accept that we share accountability for this policy and this forms an integral and essential part of our responsibilities, and ranks equally with all other company commitments and objectives. Individual responsibilities for particular Health and Safety specialisms will be detailed in this policy.

Freelance practitioners and outside contractors, must familiarise themselves with, and meet the requirements of this policy and any relevant operating procedures.

To ensure the absolute effectiveness of this policy, it will be reviewed annually.

Chemeana Lacey Talking Forward March **2023**

Commented [RA1]: Does that need to say 'by Chemeana Lacey'?



STAFF AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

DIRECTORS OF THE COMPANY

Shall be responsible for the effective implementation of the company's Health and Safety Policy.

They will be informed of all significant incidents or accidents occurring on any Talking Forward activity by the facilitator overseeing said activity. Information will be passed on to all directors of the company to ensure transparency and appropriate review of measures for future planning.

They will keep under review the necessity for further safety measures, instruction and training to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and all clients. They shall ensure all staff are instructed precisely and clearly on their duties with regard to health and safety. They shall be readily available to discuss health and safety issues with any member of staff and attend Health and Safety meetings as required.

COMPANY EMPLOYEES & FREELANCE PRACTITIONERS

All staff must make themselves fully aware of the company's Health and Safety Policy, and to this end:

- Familiarise themselves with the evacuation procedures and nearest emergency exits of the space they are working in.
- Familiarise themselves with the safe operating procedures and instructions.
- Report any defect or health hazard to their project manager.
- Report any accident or dangerous occurrence to their project manager.
- Shall not make any repairs or carry out maintenance work of any description unless authorised to do so.
- Shall comply with all hazard warning signs and notices displayed on the premises they are working in.
- Must not obstruct any fire escape route, fire equipment or fire doors.
- Must report to their project manager any medical condition, which could affect the safety of themselves or others.
- Shall not work until covered by insurance.

Commented [RA2]: Who are the Directors?

Commented [RA3]: Is 'activity' the right word? I guess this means our sessions or the communication between sessions. 'As part of any Talking Forward activity'



CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THIS POLICY

SAFETY TRAINING

The company's training needs will be assessed regularly by the team, and appropriate resources will be made available to provide this training. Refresher training will be provided as and when necessary. All staff training will be recorded and kept on file.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessments form an integral part of any safety conscious work environment. It is the responsibility of the directors to review these annually. All members of the company are responsible for highlighting new activity that needs Risk Assessment.

These assessments should be made explicit to all employees engaged in the assessed activity and the most up to date copy lodged with all core members and saved to the Talking Forward OneDrive- where files are shared amongst all staff. New legislation demands that a risk assessment must be carried out for any person under the age of 18 entering the premises in a working capacity. Similarly, an assessment should be made for all pregnant women to ensure that they are not putting themselves or their unborn child at risk.

METHOD STATEMENTS

Following the completion of a risk assessment, a method statement may also need to be produced to outline how a piece of equipment is to be used, or how a job or activity is to be carried out in the safest manner. This is especially important for activities that have been identified as having a high risk. The method statement will document the logical sequence of exactly how a job is to be carried out in a safe manner and without risks to health. It includes all the risks identified in the risk assessment, the measures needed to control those risks and any Personal Protective Equipment required.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

All accidents resulting in any form of injury, however minor, should be reported to a trained First Aider who will record the incident, using an Accident Report Form. Accidents must be reported so they can be followed up with a relevant investigation, or so a risk assessment can be made into the incident, with appropriate measures being put in place to prevent it from happening again. Accidents should also be documented so that any later, unexpected, repercussions, owing to the accident, can be reviewed using the report.

Copies of Accident Report Forms will be located on the Talking Forward OneDrive.



THE FORM

There are four sections to the Accident Report form:

Section 1: Records the personal details of the person who had the accident. All address details should be provided, even for company members of Talking Forward.

Section 2: Records the details of the accident. Details asked for in this section include; date, time and location of the accident.

Section 3: Records the details of any treatment given. Details asked for in this section include; an explanation of the accident, if possible, giving the cause of the accident. A description of any injury the person suffered and any first aid that was provided. This information should be as detailed as possible. For example: "Hurt thumb" would not suffice. The report should read; "Burnt right thumb on hot water whilst making tea. Held thumb under cold running water for 10 minutes, during which a one-inch white blister appeared."

Section 4: Records the details of the follow up investigation, completed by a director of the company.

An Accident Report should be completed as soon as possible, if not immediately, after the accident has been dealt with. Bearing in mind that the report includes a section for the personal details of the injured party; the details of members of the public, i.e. any persons not employed by Talking Forward, must be taken before they leave. All completed reports should be reported to a company director immediately, who can follow up with the injured within 48 hours.

INCIDENT REPORTS

Any incidents or 'near misses', that do not result in an injury or do not require the assistance of a First Aider, should be reported using an Incident Report form. Similarly, to accidents, incidents must be reported so they can be followed up with a relevant investigation, or so a risk assessment can be made into the incident, with appropriate measures being put in place to prevent it from happening again. Near misses [notably falling structures] may also be reportable to the local authority under the terms of RIDDOR, but this should be discussed with the owners or authorities in control of the buildings we are working in.



HIGH RISK ACTIVITY

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject matters being discussed, all company directors and freelance practitioners will have a “check in” session after each group session, to ensure they have a contact point for their own mental health and to ensure that the clients attending the groups are adequately supported and any safeguarding trigger points are considered. This responsibility sits with all company directors. This will be regularly monitored at team meetings for appropriate application.

REGULATIONS

- Risks and precautions in the above areas must be explained to the staff member/ contractor carrying out the work.
- Under no circumstances should staff working alone carry out any high-risk activities, such as facilitating a peer group session or manual handling. These are activities that require two or more people to be present.
- Whilst working alone staff should not use any equipment that has been deemed high risk in a risk assessment or method statement.
- Staff working alone should know who they can contact and how. If somebody fails to ‘check in’ as agreed, the other party must investigate immediately.

WORKING WITH ELECTRICITY

Talking Forward have a responsibility to ensure all electrical equipment used for Talking Forward is safe and fit for purpose. This includes electrical systems, electrical equipment and electrical conductors and must consider work activities on/or near electrical equipment, e.g. computers, printers, faxes, kettles, light switches etc.

Electrical equipment is PAT (portable appliance tested) tested by our technical partners and Staff must never use any equipment with a red fault label on it and should check that the green pass label is up to date.



MANUAL HANDLING

More than a quarter of the accidents reported each year are associated with manual handling – moving, lifting and/or carrying loads by hand or bodily force. The vast majority of these injuries are prolonged and can lead to days off work, most commonly a sprain or a strain and often to the back (approximately 45% of all injuries caused by handling are to the back). Sprains and strains arise from the incorrect application and/or prolongation of bodily force; poor posture and excessive repetition of movement can be important factors in their onset.

Any employees of the company who are responsible for manual handling should be told verbally the best way to lift heavy pieces by the trained member of staff in charge of the activity. **Sensible considerations are expected, ie. the use of trolleys, and sharing the weight with others.**

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING (PPE)

PPE is equipment or clothing provided in order to carry out a activity safely. These can include trolleys, ladders, harnesses, hard hats, steel toe capped boots, protective glasses and gloves.

PPE is generally the last option considered, as it is preferential to reduce risks through other means. However, if an item of PPE has been identified as required for a task in a risk assessment, Talking Forward will ensure this is made available before the activity is carried out, training will be provided if necessary.

All staff then have a responsibility to ensure that they use the item of PPE appropriately, as instructed, maintain it in good working order, such as cleaning it after use, and must report any faults with the item immediately. Not PPE should be used if it is unsafe or not fit for purpose.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS POLICY STATEMENT

Anyone deemed to be working under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs will be subject to instant dismissal. Each case will be judged on its own particular circumstances, but it is important for employees to be aware that where safety issues are concerned, it will generally be considered an act of gross misconduct.



STRESS POLICY STATEMENT

Talking Forward acknowledges that it is a difficult working environment, with members of the company often required to work with people in distress. Under such understandable conditions, stress is sometimes an inevitable pressure. However, we are always happy to offer support and advice to staff, particularly if they are experiencing the more unpleasant effects of stress for example;

Commented [RA4]: should we be bolder here. We do more than this anyway.

- Trouble with sleep, unexplained tiredness
- Unexplained headaches/neck aches, or other vague aches and pains
- Palpitations, pain or tightness in the chest Unexplained nausea
- Skin irritation or rashes
- Unexplained stomach upsets
- Rapid weight gain or loss
- Frequent colds, flu or other unexplained infections
- Mood swings
- Trouble with concentration
- Feelings of depression, anxiety and/or tension
- Sudden uncontrollable anger

Any staff wishing to discuss symptoms of stress, should contact a/all trusted member(s) of the company who will aim to help in confidence, and can discuss with other members of the company on their behalf if preferred. Any discussion of stress at work and impact on mental health will be met with understanding and a desire to help by all members of the company.