

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management Arrangements

Core | Consider | Complex

Risk Assessment

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service



Supporting you in managing Health, Safety & Wellbeing



1. Success Indicators

The following indicators will demonstrate success in this area:

- a. Managers must ensure that activities/tasks/locations/work equipment that require an assessment are identified and adequate risk assessments completed.
- b. Competent individuals complete suitable and sufficient risk assessments and implement appropriate control measures.
- d. Implementation and effectiveness of control measures are monitored and where necessary remedial action is taken to ensure risks are adequately controlled.
- e. Employees are aware of the risk assessments and control measures that are in place that are associated with their role.
- f. Risk assessments are reviewed following a significant change and/or if there is reason to believe they are no longer valid.

2. Overview

It is a legal requirement for every employer to make an assessment of significant health and safety risks arising from their activities. It is required that the findings of assessments are recorded and that everything “reasonably practicable” is done to protect people from harm.

3. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management Arrangements

These arrangements will apply to employees, pupils, service users, contractors and members of the public if they are on county council premises or when engaged in county council activities.

3.1 Management of risk assessments

Managers will ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out for all tasks, activities, locations and work activities that present a significant hazard in their area(s) of responsibility. Additionally, there may be a requirement to create a risk assessment for an individual (employees, pupils or service users) if they are at specific risk due to their health, age or other issues. This may include those who are pregnant, young workers and those with specific support needs. Managers must plan, co-ordinate and monitor how risk assessments are managed and communicated locally including:

- Identifying competent individuals to carry out assessments.
- Referring risks which cannot be managed locally to senior managers.
- Establishing communication and information sharing of outcomes with those who may be affected by the risk.

Risk assessments shall be undertaken using the following process:

a) Identify the hazards

Managers and employees will identify all the hazards associated with their area of responsibility that could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Hazards can be identified by:

- Observing the task or area;
- Referring to available guidance and information about best practice;
- Looking at accident and ill-health records;
- Checking manufacturers’ instructions or data sheets;
- Asking employees for their views.

b) Decide who might be harmed and how

For each hazard the groups of people who might be harmed and how, must be identified. The groups of people to be considered include:

- Employees
- Employees with particular requirements e.g. new and young workers, people with disabilities, new or expectant mothers;
- Cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance workers who may not be in the workplace all the time;
- Members of the public, service users, pupils; and
- Shared workplaces – how the work affects others and the risks to employees from those who share the workplace.

c) Evaluate/assess the risks and decide on the precautions to control the risks

For each hazard identified the level of risk must be evaluated (High/Medium/Low). This evaluation will include the level of harm presented by the hazard, the number of people involved, and the likelihood of the harm occurring.

Once the level of risk is established, managers must consider what control measures are already in place and what actions are already being taken to reduce the risk, consider whether these are suitable and sufficient and whether further control measures are required.

		Potential severity of harm <i>(this may include injury, loss or damage)</i>		
		Minor Harm 1	Moderate Harm 2	Serious Harm 3
Likelihood of harm occurring	Highly unlikely 1	Trivial 1	Low 2	Medium 3
	Unlikely 2	Low 2	Medium 4	High 6
	Likely 3	Medium 3	High 6	High 9

Risk Rating	Priority
High (6-9)	Immediate action required
Medium (3-4)	Actions to control the risk must now be considered and steps to manage the risk until control measures can be provided must be implemented
Low (2)	Implement reasonable control measures and monitor
Trivial (1)	No action required unless level of harm or likelihood changes

Controlling the Risk

When controlling risks the following principles should be applied, where possible in the following order:

- Eliminate the hazard altogether;
- Substitution by something less hazardous or with less risk;
- Prevent access to the hazard e.g. by guarding;
- Organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard e.g. putting barriers between pedestrians and traffic;
- Create safe methods of work and safe systems of work designed to reduce the risk;
- Provide welfare facilities e.g. first aid and washing facilities for removal of contamination;
- Provide suitable information, instruction and training;
- Ensure appropriate supervision.
- Issue personal protective equipment e.g. clothing, footwear, goggles etc.;

Personal Protective Equipment

Where managers select and provide PPE for employees/pupils/service users, managers must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations. For more information see Guidance on Personal Protective Equipment.

d) Record and implement findings

Managers must ensure that risk assessments are recorded accurately, including the dates of review.

General risk assessments

Assessments of processes or areas rather than an individual person should be recorded on the General Risk Assessment Form (HSF19).

Other Risk Assessments

The General Risk Assessment Form is not be suitable for recording risks to individuals, complex risk assessments or where there is agreed standard documentation for inter-agency working. Specific forms have been developed to support the development of effective risk assessments for employees and service users (HSF 17 & 18). Please see guidance on Individual Risk Assessments for more information.

Risk assessments in other health and safety areas

A number of risk assessment forms are available for specific areas. In these circumstances specific forms have been created, and are referenced below.

- Hazardous substances
- Manual handling
- Display screen equipment
- Fire
- Work equipment or machinery
- Stress
- Educational visits

Details of these risk assessment forms can be found in the relevant management procedure and advice is available for the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service.

e) Monitoring and reviewing arrangements

Risk assessments should also be reviewed following significant changes or if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid e.g. after an accident. It is good practice to review risk assessments annually. Managers must monitor the effectiveness of control measures and ensure that they are implemented and effective.

3.2 Employee Engagement

Employees must be aware of risk assessments and control measures for their area of work and co-operate and engage in the risk assessment process including complying with control measures. Employees shall report any defects in control measures immediately to their manager.

3.3 Dynamic Risk Assessments

Where an unexpected hazard arises when an activity is in progress, and this has not previously been risk assessed, employees may have to make common sense decisions based on the information available and their competencies allowing them to take action to manage the risk. This is known as a dynamic risk assessment. Following completion of a dynamic risk assessment a formal risk assessment must be completed as soon as practicable.

4. Training and information

Managers and employees responsible for the planning, co-ordination and monitoring of risk assessments must be competent to complete these tasks and may require appropriate training. Employees involved in the creation of risk assessments must be competent to complete the process and may require training. Managers must ensure that they retain employee training records.

5. Record Keeping

Once a risk assessment is no longer valid it must be kept for at least 5 years. In the case of individual risk assessments that relate to a child the assessment must be kept for 21 years from their date of birth.

6. Health Safety and Wellbeing Supporting Information

- Guidance on individual risk assessments
- Guidance on provision and use of Personal Protective Equipment

7. Forms

HSF 19 General Risk Assessments Form

HSF 17 Employee Individual Risk Assessment Form

HSF18 Service User Individual Risk Assessment Form